

2000

Raghupathi Bhatta

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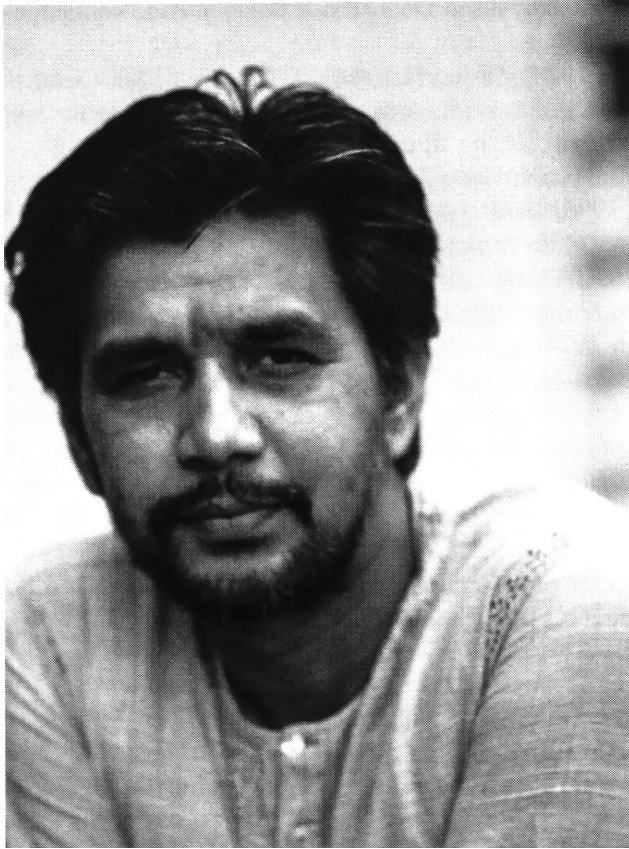
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Abstract

Raghupathi Bhatta, whose work features on the cover of this issue, is an artist of Mysore, Southern India. His art draws upon themes and images of the Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad-Gita and the Dhammapadha. Bhatta's miniature paintings and Ganjifa (traditional playing cards introduced to India in the early sixteenth century) have been exhibited overseas in England, USA, Tunisia, Germany and Japan. Of the four paintings that follow, the first is of Lakshmi, Hindu goddess of wealth and good fortune and wife of Vishnu. Accounts of her birth say that she rose from the churning of the milky ocean, seated on a lotus and holding a lotus blossom in her hand. The second painting features Indrani, one of seven divine mothers known as Sapthamatrika. Each is a shakti, or female counterpart of a Hindu god, and each mother is identifiable by her weapons, ornaments, mounts and banner emblems. The next two paintings are drawn from the Dhammapada (perhaps the most well-known and often-quoted of Buddhist sacred texts). The last painting of the two features Buddha triumphing over the twin evils of krodha (anger) and kama (lust) - represented by the two serpents.



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